**Session 4: Mindful Parenting: Managing Emotions in Everyday Interactions**

***Domain: Positive Behavior Support***

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| **Relevant Family Goal:** |  |

* **Session Goals** *(check all that apply)*
  + Understand triggers for strong emotional reactions in order to anticipate and more effectively manage emotional reactions
  + Think about how the parent’s emotional state is impacted by the child’s behavior
  + Learn effective tools to manage parents’ own emotional reactions
  + Practice tools to manage parents’ own emotional reactions
  + Identify supports parents can use to promote their child’s emotion regulation
* **Handouts to Use** *(check all that apply;* [*click HERE*](https://thefamilycheckup.com/content/everyday-parenting-handouts#session4) *to find handouts)*
  + 4A The Benefits of Taking a Break, pg. 72
  + 4B Steps to Give “Take a Break” Directions, pg. 73
  + 4C Practicing S-T-O-P Technique, pg. 74
  + 4D Self-Care Plan, pg. 75
  + 4E Thoughts, Feelings, and Actions, pg. 76
  + 4F Reframing Thoughts, pg. 77
  + 4G Self-Care Activities, pg. 78
  + 4H Skills for Managing Emotions, pg. 79
* **Videos to Share** *(check all that apply;* [*click HERE*](https://thefamilycheckup.com/content/parenting-videos#wellness-young) *to find videos)*

**Bear videos** *(available in English or Spanish)*

* Mood Spiral (Younger Child)
* Breathing Exercise (Younger Child)
* Let Thoughts Go (Younger Child)
* Coping with Stress (Younger Child)

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* **Teaching Process for Each Skill Chosen for Session**

*Add notes below from your review of EDP book. Handouts and page numbers are listed to help you, but you will choose which specific activities, scripts, handouts, etc. to use tailored to the parent and family, and based on what matches parent needs and goals.*

* + **Check on Home Practice from last meeting**
  + **Set agenda for session:** Confirm with parent the session goals checked above
  + **Teach**: Include rationale and benefits (pg. 60); use relevant video(s) checked above
    - **Connecting through co-regulation**: explain co-regulation and how it’s relevant to parents and children (pg. 61); link to child’s ability to learn self-regulation; facilitate parent reflection
    - **Taking a break or time out**: discuss benefits (Handout 4A); explain concept and steps for taking a break to support calming down (pgs. 61-62; Handout 4B); facilitate parent reflection
    - **Skills for managing emotions**: Discuss steps in S-T-O-P technique in Handout 4C; describe parent self-care (pg. 66); describe connections between thoughts, feelings and actions (pgs. 66-67); describe reframing (pg. 68); describe mindful breathing (pgs. 69-70)
  + **Model**: Consider using relevant video(s) checked above; use scenario in manual (pg. 63) and Handout 4B to demonstrate a parent giving their child directions to take a break and demonstrating Wrong Way/ Right Way for Take a Break; engage parent in reflection.
  + **Practice**: tailor to family
    - **Initial practice and develop plan for home**: Consider using scenario in manual (pg. 65) or Handout 4B to use for practice; debrief practice of giving directions; develop plan for parent practice at home, including practicing skills with a friend, co-parent, etc. before using with their child
    - **Review and practice various calm-down strategies**: Review S-T-O-P Technique (Handout 4C), Parent Self-Care and plan (Handout 4D and 4G), Making Connections Between Thoughts, Feelings, and Actions (Handout 4E), Reframing Thoughts (Handout 4F), and Mindful Breathing (pgs. 65-70)
  + **Debrief**: Facilitate parent self-reflection on use of various emotion regulation strategies; give your feedback on strengths and challenges from the practice; plan for possible barriers to use of new strategies (consider Tips for Success at Home, pg. 70)
* **Home Practice**
  + Homework Option: Encourage parents to try each strategy at least once in the next week and after practicing the skill, reflect and answer questions on Handout 4H
  + Tailor home practice to child, parent and family, including cultural and general context
  + Optional: prep for use of Emoji Tracking Worksheet [Tracking Parent Skills Practice Emojis - English](https://thefamilycheckup.com/sites/default/files/Tracking%20Parent%20Skills%20Practice%20-%20Emojis.docx)
  + Other:
* **Schedule Next Session**
  + Discuss which goal and parenting strategy parent wants to address in next session
  + Plan to enable session to be focused and not distracting, such as arranging for child(ren) to be occupied. See [*Establishing a Focused Environment for Sessions*](https://thefamilycheckup.com/sites/default/files/Establishing%20a%20Focused%20Environment%20for%20Sessions.docx).

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**Tips for Emotion Management Skills (pgs. 66-70)**

**Parent self-care:** Identify practices that support parent wellbeing, especially during stressful times. These can include routines that support healthy behaviors (e.g., at least 7 hrs. of sleep) or time for self (e.g., enjoy a hobby, relaxing).

**Connections between thoughts, feelings and actions:**

1. Increase awareness of thoughts (negative thoughts during a difficult situation, e.g., “I’m a bad parent”).
2. Reflect on how thoughts influence emotions and behaviors (e.g., thinking “I’m a bad parent” made me feel guilty [emotion] and less likely to consistently set limits with my child [behavior]).

**Reframing:**

1. Identify situation that led to the unhelpful thoughts; identify the unhelpful thoughts that arose; consider how the unhelpful thoughts contributed to upsetting feelings, and how feelings influenced your behavior.
2. Consider alternative thoughts that may be more accurate than the unhelpful thought; practice replacing unhelpful thought with the more accurate thought; explore anticipated emotions and behaviors in response to more accurate thought.

**Mindful breathing:** Helps reduce stress and means we: (1) focus attention on breathing, (2) slow down breath, and (3) pay attention to way it feels each time we inhale and each time we exhale.